



**United States Attorney's Office
District of Columbia**

**Channing D. Phillips
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PRESS RELEASE

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District Teenager Sentenced to 24 Years in Prison for Committing Two Drive-by Shootings in 2008

WASHINGTON - A 19-year-old Southeast District teenager, Diedrick R. Johnson, was sentenced today by Superior Court Judge Ronna L. Beck to 24 years of incarceration for his role in two drive-by shootings committed just eleven days apart in January 2008, and involving eight young victims, Acting U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips announced. The first shooting occurred on January 11, 2008, in the 2800 block of Douglas Road, SE, and the second on January 22, 2008, in the 3300 block of 4th Street, SE, just outside of Ballou Senior High School. On February 13, 2009, Johnson pled guilty to one count of Aggravated Assault while Armed and one count of Possession of a Firearm During a Crime of Violence for the January 11, 2008 shooting, along with one count of Assault with Intent to Kill and one count of Possession of a Firearm During a Crime of Violence for the January 22, 2008 shooting.

According to the government's evidence presented at the plea hearing, on January 11, 2008, Johnson, who was then 17 years old and subsequently charged as an adult in this matter, was a passenger in a vehicle driving down Douglas Road, SE, when he fired a .40 caliber handgun multiple times at a group of teenagers walking down the street. Johnson struck five of the teens, causing critical injuries to two of them. One of the victims was shot in the chest, where the bullet remains lodged, and a second victim's finger was almost entirely severed and remains permanently disfigured.

Eleven days later, on January 22, 2008, Johnson fired a .380 caliber handgun multiple times into a crowd of young students as they left Ballou High School. Johnson was trying to kill members of a rival neighborhood crew, but instead shot four innocent bystanders. One of those victims was struck in the back, where the bullet still remains lodged.

Officers recovered the .40 caliber handgun Johnson used in the first shooting, during a search of Johnson's residence on January 23, 2008. During this same search, officers found a box of .380 caliber ammunition that was the same caliber and make that Johnson used in the second shooting.

In sentencing Johnson, Judge Beck acknowledged the government's reference to Johnson as a "would-be killer." Judge Beck also commented on the affect that Johnson's crimes had on

the community, as reflected in the impact statements submitted by community members in aid of sentencing.

In announcing today's sentence, Acting U.S. Attorney Phillips praised the work of Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Detective James Victor Francis, the lead detective on the case, along with several other diligent detectives and officers from the Seventh District who assisted in the investigation. Acting U.S. Attorney Phillips additionally praised the work of the legal assistants and support staff who assisted in the preparation of these cases. He also thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney Erin B. Andrews who prosecuted these cases, as well as Assistant U.S. Attorneys Vasu Muthyala, William Woodruff, and Tejpal S. Chawla who assisted in investigating and indicting these cases.

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